

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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TAGS: EFIN, EIND, ETEL, PFOR, SCUL, CA.

SUBJ: BILL C-58 : MANITOBA EDITORIAL.

1. WINNIPEG TRIBUNE OF AUGUST 9 HAD INTERESTING
EDITORIAL ENTITLED "CULTURAL ISLAND OF LITTLE VALUE"
ON BILL C-58 WHICH IS QUOTED IN FULL BECAUSE OF ITS
PITH.

" THE FAT MAY SOON BE IN THE FIRE IN THE MATTER OF
OTTAWA S EFFORTS AT CULTURAL PURIFICATION.
EVERYONE REMEMBERS THE RHUBARB OVER THE BANNING
OF TIME CANADA, AND ITS LATER DISAPPEARANCE. FAR
LESS VISIBLE, AT LEAST IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY,
WAS THE PARALLEL DISPUTE OVER THE EFFECTIVE BANNING
OF AMERICAN BORDER TELEVISION STATIONS. THE PROVISION
OF BILL C-58 IS THE SAME - ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES ON
THESE STATIONS WILL NOT BE DEDUCTIBLE AS A BUSINESS
EXPENSE - BUT THE TIMING IS DIFFERENT: THE BILL HAS
YET TO BE PROCLAIMED.
WINNIPEG ISN'T INVOLVED BECAUSE OUR FORMER BORDER TV
STATION, KCND, MOVED NORTH, CHANGED OWNERSHIP, AND
BECAME CKND.
THE BATTLE AGAINST PROCLAMATION OF THE NEW LAW IS
BEING CARRIED BY THREE TV STATIONS IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK
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(WHICH SERVE THE LUCRATIVE TORONTO MARKET) AND A

STATION IN BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON, WHICH SERVES VANCOUVER.

WE VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET EXCITED BY THE CONTROVERSY, NOT CARING ONE WAY OR THE OTHER WHETHER OTTAWA SUCCEEDS IN STOMPING A FEW AMERICAN TV STATIONS. NOW, HOWEVER, THE MATTER HAS ESCALATED CONSIDERABLY. A GROUP OF 18 PROMINENT UNITED STATES SENATORS HAS PREPARED LEGISLATION WHICH, IF PASSED, WOULD STOP ALL MOVEMENT OF FILMS, TELEVISION TAPES, SONGS, JINGLES AND OTHER MATERIAL OF THAT NATURE FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES, IF THE MATERIAL WAS PRODUCED IN CANADA.

PASSAGE OF THE BILL WOULD EFFECTIVELY KILL A LARGE CHUNK OF THE CANADIAN RECORDING INDUSTRY, WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE THE MAKERS OF TELEVISION PROGRAMS IN THIS COUNTRY, AND WOULD STOP COLD THE EXPORT OF LONG AND SHORT FILMS TO THE U.S.

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THOSE TELEVISION STATIONS, IT IS A DIABOLICALLY EFFECTIVE RETALIATION. THE INTENT OF ITS SPONSORS IS NOT REALLY TO SEE IT PASSED, BUT TO USE IT AS A WEAPON IN GETTING THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE OVER BILL C-58.

OPPONENTS OF THE BILL HAVE SAID ALL ALONG THAT IT REPRESENTS, IN THE CASE OF BORDER TV STATIONS, A RESTRICTION OF TRADE. NOW THE GROUP OF SENATORS APPARENTLY AGREE WITH THAT, AND ARE WILLING TO FORCE THE ISSUE.

WE DON'T THINK IT'S ESSENTIAL TO THE CANADIAN WAY OF LIFE TO KNOCK CANADIAN ADVERTISING OFF BORDER TELEVISION STATIONS. IT MAY BE USEFUL FOR THE OWNERS OF CANADIAN TV STATIONS, BUT MOST ARE DOING QUITE WELL AND PROBABLY DON'T NEED THE MONEY.

BUT IF OTTAWA IS ADAMENT, AND CONSIDERS THE MATTER OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE, IT SHOULD AT LEAST SIT DOWN WITH THE AMERICANS AND NEGOTIATE OR DISCUSS. IT MUST NOT ALLOW THE RETALATORY MOVE TO BECOME LAW. IF IT DID, CANADA WOULD BECOME A CULTURAL ISLAND, AND THAT, NATIONALISM ASIDE, UNCLASSIFIED

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WON'T DO ANYBODY ANY GOOD."

2. COMMENT: THE EDITOR, AS EMBASSY AWARE, IS GOING TO REPUBLICAN CONVENTION AS IVP GRANTEE AND ALSO HAS REQUESTED INTERVIEW WITH GOVERNOR CARTER. HUTSON

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